



Burned bodies: post-mortem computed tomography, an essential tool for modern forensic medicine

Submitted by Beatrice Guillaumat on Mon, 12/17/2018 - 15:57

Titre	Burned bodies: post-mortem computed tomography, an essential tool for modern forensic medicine
Type de publication	Article de revue
Auteur	Coty, J-B [1], Nedelcu, C [2], Yahya, S [3], Dupont, Vincent [4], Rougé-Maillart, Clotilde [5], Verschoore, M [6], Ridereau-Zins, Catherine [7], Aubé, Christophe [8]
Editeur	SpringerOpen
Type	Article scientifique dans une revue à comité de lecture
Année	2018
Langue	Anglais
Date	Octobre 2018
Numéro	5
Pagination	731-743
Volume	9
Titre de la revue	Insights into imaging
ISSN	1869-4101
Mots-clés	Burned bodies [9], Post-mortem computed tomography [10], Thermal amputation [11], Thermal epidural haematoma [12]
Résumé en anglais	<p>Currently, post-mortem computed tomography (PMCT) has become an accessible and contemporary tool for forensic investigations. In the case of burn victims, it provides specific semiologies requiring a prudent understanding to differentiate between the normal post-mortem changes from heat-related changes. The aim of this pictorial essay is to provide to the radiologist the keys to establish complete and focused reports in cases of PMCT of burn victims. Thus, the radiologist must discern all the contextual divergences with the forensic history, and must be able to report all the relevant elements to answer to the forensic pathologist the following questions: Are there tomographic features that could help to identify the victim? Is there evidence of remains of biological fluids in liquid form available for toxicological analysis and DNA sampling? Is there another obvious cause of death than heat-related lesions, especially metallic foreign bodies of ballistic origin? Finally, what are the characteristic burn-related injuries seen on the corpse that should be sought during the autopsy?</p> <p>TEACHING POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CT is highly useful to find features permitting the identification of a severely burned body.• PMCT is a major asset in gunshot injuries to depict ballistic foreign bodies in the burned cadavers.• CT is able to recognise accessible blood for tests versus heat clot (air-crescent sign).• Heat-related fractures are easily differentiated from traumatic fractures.• Epidural collections with a subdural appearance are typical heat-related head lesions.
URL de la notice	http://okina.univ-angers.fr/publications/ua18438 [13]
DOI	10.1007/s13244-018-0633-2 [14]

Lien vers le document <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs13244-018-0633-2> [15]

Titre abrégé Insights Imaging

Identifiant (ID) PubMed 29882051 [16]

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- [16] <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29882051?dopt=Abstract>

Publié sur *Okina* (<http://okina.univ-angers.fr>)